

STATE OF MAINE
STATE BOARD OF CORRECTIONS

NOTICE OF INTENT TO CONDUCT REVIEW
OF AROOSTOOK COUNTY JAIL

This Notice of Intent to Conduct Review of the Aroostook County Jail is issued by the State Board of Corrections (“the Board”) pursuant to 03-201 C.M.R. ch. 2 § 2(4)(A) (2009).

I. Consideration of Downsizing the Aroostook County Jail

The Aroostook County Jail (“ACJ”) located at 15 Broadway in Houlton, Maine currently operates within the coordinated correctional system as a full-service jail with an approved capacity of 123 inmates. On May 8, 2014, the Aroostook County Commissioners submitted to the Board for review and approval a request and plan to downsize the ACJ. The proposed plan calls for the closure of the entire second floor of the ACJ as well as the west wing holding area resulting in the reduction in the capacity of the ACJ from 123 to 37 inmates.

If implemented, this downsizing plan could potentially impact the ACJ and the coordinated correctional system in significant ways. Aroostook County claims that the proposed plan will allow ACJ to eliminate staff positions resulting in a substantial reduction in its expenses for correctional services. On the other hand, the proposed change would likely cause an increase in the number of Aroostook County inmates who will need to be transported to and housed at other facilities with the coordinated correctional system. If the downsizing plan is approved by the Board and results in net county assessment revenue in excess of county jail appropriations for Aroostook County, these net revenues will be transferred to the State Board of Corrections Operational Support Fund program pursuant to 34-A M.R.S. § 1805(3)(A).

Pursuant to 03-201 C.M.R. ch. 2 § 2(B), in making its decision whether to downsize the ACJ, the Board will consider whether the proposed change will:

1. Accomplish the goals of the Act to Better Coordinate and Reduce the Cost of Delivery of State and County Correctional Services, P.L. 2008, ch. 653 *as amended* by P.L. 2013, ch. 598 (emergency effective May 1, 2014);
2. Meet the needs for bed space capacity at the regional level;
3. Meet the needs for bed space capacity and services at the statewide level;
4. Achieve cost efficiencies and future savings;
5. Avoid the need for constructing new correctional facilities;
6. Preserve the capacity to address local public safety needs; and

7. Implement evidence-based practices.

II. Written Public Comment

Pursuant to 03-201 C.M.R. ch. 2 § 2(4)(B), the Board now encourages all stakeholders and interested parties to this matter to provide written comments to the Board. The Board will make any such written comment a part of its record provided that the written comment is received by the Board within twenty (20) business days of the publication of this notification. Written comments should identify the commenter and be addressed to:

Board of Corrections
House Station #111
Augusta, ME 04333-0111

DATED: May 23, 2014

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ryan Thornell', is positioned above a horizontal line.

RYAN THORNELL
Executive Director